

POPULATION AND MIGRATION STATISTICS COMMITTEE (SCOTLAND)

Household estimates and projections branch update

Staff changes

1. Thomas Robertson left GROS in September. The branch now has two new Assistant Statisticians: Anneli Lyon, who will mainly be working on the household projections, and Martin Macfie, who will be working on small area statistics, and developing replacement household statistics, to replace the statistics that are expected to be lost when Council Tax is replaced with a Local Income Tax.

Small area household estimates

2. GROS has set up a new data collection to obtain data zone information on the number of occupied and vacant dwellings, from Council Tax systems. This will allow far more detailed local information to be produced than is currently the case, and it will also enable us to produce household projections for different geographies (such as city regions and national parks), based on aggregations of these data.

3. The first, pilot, data collection was carried out in September 2006, and the first full data collection was carried out in September 2007.

4. The HEP branch is carrying out analysis of the data from each council, for quality assurance purposes. We will copy the PAMS LA member into the email to the council's Finance contact, showing a summary of the information collected and any issues identified. This will allow PAMS members to help with the quality assurance of this data, where appropriate.

5. We are aiming to publish the figures from this data collection via the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics website, next year.

Household projections

2. Following the revisions to the mid-year population estimates for some areas, and the subsequent revisions to the 2004-based population projections, we have revised our 2004-based household projections. The revised figures are available from the GROS website at <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/household-projections-statistics/index.html>.

3. The 2006-based national population projections were published in October, and the sub-national population projections will be published at the end of January. We will aim to publish the 2006-based household projections within a few months of this.

4. The 2006-based household projections will include a number of improvements:
- We have re-written the household projections software in SAS and the new system is more flexible and easier to use.
 - We will incorporate updated information on residents of communal establishments, so we are less reliant on Census data. We will consult PAMS LA members on the communal establishment figures, before publication.
 - We are considering including survey data to update the information on household type for Scotland as a whole, so that the projections will reflect any changes in household structures since the 2001 Census.
 - We are hoping to extend the population and household projections to cover a 25 year period, rather than 20 years. Many councils need this information for their Development Plans, so they often extend the projections themselves. It makes more sense for GROS to do this, if it is needed.
 - At some stage, we will produce population and household projections for National Parks, and 'City Regions', as well as local authority areas, but the timing of this will depend on when the boundaries of the new City Regions have been finalised.
 - We are considering producing some form of variant projections, for Scotland as a whole.
5. This will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting of the Household Analysis Review Group (HARG).

The future direction of housing policy

2. PAMS member may also be interested to see the Scottish Government's discussion paper on the future direction of housing policy in Scotland: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/10/30153156/0>. Any responses can be sent via this website - the closing date for responses is 25 January 2008.

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